



Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1.-9. (Canceled)

10. (New) A ceramic material obtained by a method comprising the steps of:

mixing a defatted bran derived from rice bran with at least one thermosetting resin selected from the group consisting of a phenol resin, diaryl phthalate resin, unsaturated polyester resin, epoxy resin, polyimide resin and triazine resin at a mixing ratio of the defatted bran to the thermosetting resin of 50 to 90:50 to 10 by weight to form a mixture;

kneading the mixture;

subjecting the kneaded mixture to a primary firing in an inert gas at a temperature in the range of 700 to 1000°C;

pulverizing the kneaded mixture after the primary firing into carbonized powders;

kneading the carbonated powders with ceramic powders, a solvent and a binder to yield a plastic workpiece;

pressure-forming the plastic workpiece at a pressure in the range of 10 to 100 MPa to give a formed plastic workpiece; and

subjecting the formed plastic workpiece to secondary firing in an inert gas atmosphere or in an atmosphere having no oxygen at a temperature in a range of 100 to 1400°C, wherein the ceramic powders are selected from the group consisting of SiO₂, Si₃N₄, ZrO₂, Al₂O₃, SiC, BN, WC, TiC, a Sialon compound, porcelain clay, feldspathic clay and kaolinite, wherein the mixing ratio of the carbonized powders to the ceramic powders is 5 to 95:95 to 5 by weight and the

binder is added in an amount of 1 to 50 parts by weight, based on 100 parts by weight of the carbonized powders.

11. (New) The ceramic material according to Claim 10, wherein the grain size of the carbonized powders is in the range of 10 to 500 μm .

12. (New) The ceramic material according to Claim 10, wherein the plastic workpiece is pressure-formed into a tile in the shape of a square or rectangular sheet.

13. (New) The ceramic material according to Claim 10, wherein the plastic workpiece is pressure-formed into the shape of a square or rectangular sheet.

14. (New) A method of fabricating a ceramic material comprising the steps of:

mixing a defatted bran derived from rice bran with at least one thermosetting resin selected from the group consisting of a phenol resin, diaryl phthalate resin, unsaturated polyester resin, epoxy resin, polyamide resin and triazine resin at a mixing ratio of the defatted bran to the thermosetting resin of 50 to 90:50 to 10 by weight to form a mixture;

kneading the mixture;

subjecting the kneaded mixture to a primary firing in an inert gas at a temperature in the range of 700 to 1000°C; pulverizing the kneaded mixture after the primary firing into carbonized powders;

kneading the carbonized powders with ceramic powders, a solvent and a binder to yield a plastic workpiece;

pressure-forming the plastic workpiece at a pressure in the range of 10 to 100 MPa to give a formed plastic workpiece; and

subjecting the formed plastic workpiece to secondary firing in an inert gas atmosphere or in an atmosphere having

no oxygen at a temperature in a range of 100 to 1400°C, wherein the ceramic powders are selected from the group consisting of SiO_2 , Si_3N_4 , ZrO_2 , Al_2O_3 , SiC , BN , WC , TiC , a Sialon compound, porcelain clay, feldspathic clay, kaolinite, wherein the mixing ratio of the carbonized powders to the ceramic powders is 5 to 95:95 to 5 by weight and the binder is added in an amount of 1 to 50 parts by weight, based on 100 parts by weight of the carbonized powders.

15. (New) The method of Claim 14, wherein the formed plastic workpiece is subjected to the secondary firing at a temperature in the range of 1000 to 1400°C at a warming rate of 0.5 to 3°C/min to a temperature of 500°C and cooled at a rate of 0.5 to 4°C/min until reaching a temperature of 500°C.